	Agency Name	Office of Community Services (OCS)
	Chapter No./Name	9. Home Development
	Part No./Name	5. Certification Process
	Section No./Name	Certification Process
	Document No./Name	9-575 Certification of Agency Employees as Foster Adoptive Parents
	Effective Date	December 1, 2014

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY


Employees of the * Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) ** may become certified as foster and/or adoptive parents for this agency providing that certain additional requirements are met that are designed to prevent bias, abuse of authority, favoritism, and/or use of influence in the certification, placement, or service delivery processes.

II. PROCEDURES

A. GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFYING * DCFS ** EMPLOYEES AS FOSTER OR ADOPTIVE PARENTS

The following guidelines shall be followed when an agency employee applies to become a foster and/or an adoptive parent for this agency:

- The employee shall apply in the same manner as non-employee applicants.
- The employee shall agree to disqualify himself from participation in all staff or agency transactions involving the approval or denial of the foster/adoptive home application.
- The usual home study and pre-service training procedures shall be applied. In addition, the Home Development Worker shall assess the employee/applicant's abilities to:
 - a. separate the two roles of foster/adoptive parent and employee;
 - b. utilize the correct channels of communication;
 - c. understand lines of authority as a foster/adoptive parent;
 - d. cope with the reality of working with the agency at work and in the home;
 - e. cope with the feelings and attitudes related to being an employee and experiencing a disruption in the placement or having a child abuse/neglect investigation conducted.
- An employee applicant who has observed the pre-service training as an employee shall attend the pre-service training as an applicant.


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- The Regional * Administrator ** or designee shall be notified prior to inviting an employee/applicant to pre-service training so that all personnel related matters can be considered in advance.
- The Regional * Administrator ** or his/her designee shall decide, on a case by case basis, whether an employee/applicant who works in an office that houses the Home Development staff may attend pre-service training and have their home study completed in his/her own region or whether the pre-service training and home study should be conducted in an adjoining region.
- The Regional * Administrator ** or designee shall be included in a staffing prior to certification of the employee/applicant.
- The employee/applicant shall use annual leave for any interviews or home consultations that are required during normal working hours.
- Emergency placements are permissible with an employee who is a relative or friend of a child coming into care or an employee who meets the requirements for emergency placement of a child unknown to a prospective foster parent.
- The employee/applicant shall agree to adhere to certain restrictions that shall be delineated in writing in an Employee Certification Agreement for the purpose of avoiding any conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest. (Refer to section 9-575,B of this policy manual for the criteria for the Agreement.)
- The application of an employee shall be approved or denied approval in the same manner as that of other applications.

B. CRITERIA FOR THE EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATION AGREEMENT


The Employee Certification Agreement shall be developed and signed by the employee/applicant, Home Development Worker, Home Development Supervisor, and * Child Welfare Manager ** prior to approval of an employee/applicant as a foster or adoptive parent. The Agreement shall be filed in the foster and/or adoptive parent's case record as part of the home study. A copy of the Agreement shall be given to the employee/applicant. The Agreement shall include the following information and incorporate the following guidelines:

- The Agreement shall name the parish or regional office which will carry the case record.
- The employee foster/adoptive parent shall agree to take approved leave to attend to any business or to attend any activity on behalf of the foster/adoptive

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child. This includes any activity that occurs at the work site such as a Family Team Conference, etc.

- The employee/foster/adoptive parent shall agree to remove himself from direct involvement in staffings, case reviews, court hearings, or access to the case records of the child, his birth family, or the foster/adoptive home case record in his capacity as an employee.
- The employee foster/adoptive parent may participate in all activities related to being a foster/adoptive parent of the child that would be expected of any other foster/adoptive parent.
- An employee foster/adoptive parent shall not have a child placed in his home for whom he has current case or other work related responsibility or responsibility involving the birth family.
- Child Protection Investigations for employee foster/adoptive homes shall be conducted by a parish other than the parish which is the employee's duty station.
- The child placed with the employee foster/adoptive parent shall be supervised by a unit in the parish office other than the unit in which the employee works. In small parish offices or when another supervisory unit is unavailable in the same office, a contiguous parish office shall carry the child's record.
- Placements in the foster/adoptive homes of employees shall be approved by the * Child Welfare Manager ** of the supervising parish and by the Home Development Supervisor.
- The * Child Welfare Manager ** who approves a placement in an employee foster/adoptive home shall inform the Regional * Administrator ** in writing by the next working day of the placement.
- The employee foster/adoptive parent shall agree not to use agency postage, letterhead stationery, or clerical time for correspondence on behalf of the foster/adoptive child or the foster/adoptive home.
- Verbal or written messages sent by the court, school, medical profession, etc. to the agency through the employee foster/adoptive parent shall receive the same treatment as such a message would receive when received from any other foster/adoptive parent. The appropriate staff should follow up, confirm the message, and take necessary action, if needed. The message shall not be viewed as a directive for the agency.

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- The consequences of any violation of this agreement shall result in a corrective action plan or decertification of the home.

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

* There are no forms associated with this policy. **

IV. REFERENCES

* There are no references associated with this policy. **